

3.13 SEAT BELT USAGE

This section presents a series of data displays identifying the seat belt usage rates of drivers and injured passengers in automobiles, trucks, vans, and motor homes involved in Missouri traffic crashes. Most of the data displays focus on only the driver. Data on the seat belt usage rates of both injured and uninjured drivers were available for analysis. In the case of passengers, data were only available for those injured in the traffic crash. Injured passenger seat belt usage rates are not indicative of seat belt usage rates of all passengers involved in traffic crashes.

There are other limitations to the data presented in this section. In a large number of cases, driver and injured passenger seat belt usage information was not reported by the investigating officer. In the following data displays, the number of cases where seat belt usage information was not known is presented but excluded when calculating seat belt usage rates (Row %).

In addition, in cases where the investigating officer does report driver and injured passenger seat belt use, the officer is relying on the word of the person in most instances.

As a result of these limiting factors, it is expected that the actual seat belt usage rates in Missouri's 2000 traffic crashes are somewhat less than the findings in this section would indicate. These limiting factors should be taken into consideration when viewing these statistics.

2000 SUMMARY ANALYSIS

- Of the drivers of automobiles, trucks, vans, and motor homes killed in 2000 Missouri traffic crashes, 29.7% were wearing seat belts. Of the passengers killed in these types of vehicles, 32.7% wore their seat belt. For drivers involved in traffic crashes not killed or injured, 92.9% were wearing their seat belt at the time of the crash.
- A driver involved in a 2000 Missouri traffic crash had a 1 in 3 chance of being injured if they were not wearing their seat belt. However, if they were wearing a seat belt their chances of being injured in the crash were 1 in 7. When examining driver deaths, the differences are much more dramatic. A driver involved in a 2000 Missouri traffic crash had a 1 in 59 chance of being killed if they were not wearing a seat belt. In those cases where a driver wore a seat belt, their chance of being killed was 1 in 1,369.
- Of those drivers totally ejected from their vehicle, 15.6% were wearing their seat belts. Of those partially ejected, 38.5% were wearing seat belts. Of those not ejected, 90.9% were wearing seat belts.
- Of Missouri licensed drivers involved in 2000 traffic crashes, 90.6% were wearing seat belts compared to 94.5% of drivers licensed in other states. Only 66.0% of unlicensed drivers were wearing seat belts at the time of the crash.

2000 MISSOURI TRAFFIC CRASHES
DRIVERS AND PASSENGERS OF AUTOMOBILES, TRUCKS, VANS, AND MOTOR HOMES
PERSONAL INJURY SEVERITY BY SEAT BELT USAGE

	WEARING	NOT WEARING	UNKNOWN	TOTAL
KILLED				
DRIVER <i>ROW %</i>	180 29.7	427 70.3	70	677 100.0
PASSENGER <i>ROW %</i>	92 32.7	189 67.3	47	328 100.0
MAJOR DISABLING INJURY				
DRIVER <i>ROW %</i>	2,896 60.5	1,887 39.5	596	5,379 100.0
PASSENGER <i>ROW %</i>	1,242 49.5	1,269 50.5	253	2,764 100.0
EVIDENT INJURY				
DRIVER <i>ROW %</i>	12,286 74.2	4,279 25.8	1,979	18,544 100.0
PASSENGER <i>ROW %</i>	5,346 63.4	3,093 36.6	982	9,421 100.0
PROBABLE INJURY				
DRIVER <i>ROW %</i>	18,509 88.8	2,322 11.2	2,151	22,982 100.0
PASSENGER <i>ROW %</i>	9,084 81.2	2,099 18.8	1,240	12,423 100.0
NOT INJURED				
DRIVER <i>ROW %</i>	212,491 92.9	16,144 7.1	31,529	260,164 100.0
PASSENGER ¹	-	-	-	-
INJURY UNKNOWN				
DRIVER <i>ROW %</i>	1,385 86.1	224 13.9	18,125	19,734 100.0
PASSENGER ¹	-	-	-	-

¹Data on all passengers of vehicles not injured or whose injury level is unknown in Missouri crashes are not available in the Statewide Traffic Accident Records System (STARS). As a result, these statistics have been excluded.

TABLE 3.13.1